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Committee on Conferences
Substantive session of 2003

Draft report

Addendum

Rapporteur: Mr. Andrius **Namavičius** (Lithuania)

The Committee on Conferences recommends to the General Assembly the inclusion of the following paragraphs in its resolution:

Pattern of conferences

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its relevant resolutions, including resolutions 40/243 of 18 December 1985, 41/213 of 19 December 1986, 43/222 A to E of 21 December 1988, 52/214 of 22 December 1997, 54/248 of 23 December 1999, 55/222 of 23 December 2000, 56/242 of 24 December 2001, 56/254 D of 27 March 2002, 56/262 of 15 February 2002, 56/287 of 27 June 2002 and 57/283 B of 15 April 2002,

Reaffirming its resolution 42/207 C of 11 December 1987, in which it requested the Secretary-General to ensure the equal treatment of the official languages of the United Nations,

Also reaffirming the relevant provisions of its resolutions on multilingualism in the field of conference management,

Having considered the report of the Committee on Conferences[1] and the relevant reports of the Secretary-General,[2]

I
Calendar of conferences and meetings

1. *Notes with appreciation* the work of the Committee on Conferences;

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 32* and corrigendum (A/58/32 and Corr.1).

[2] A/58/194 and Add.1; A/58/213.

2. *Approves* the draft biennial calendar of conferences and meetings of the United Nations for 2004-2005, as submitted by the Committee on Conferences,[3] taking into account the observations of the Committee, and subject to the provisions of the present resolution;

3. *Authorizes* the Committee on Conferences to make any adjustments to the calendar of conferences and meetings for 2004-2005 that may become necessary as a result of actions and decisions taken by the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session;

4. *Notes with satisfaction* that the Secretariat has taken into account the arrangements referred to in General Assembly resolutions 53/208 A of 18 December 1998, 54/248, 55/222 and 56/242 concerning Orthodox Good Friday and the official holidays of Id al-Fitr and Id al-Adha, and requests all intergovernmental bodies to continue to observe those decisions when planning their meetings;

II

A. Utilization of conference-servicing resources and facilities

1. *Notes* the improvements in the utilization of the conference centre at the Economic Commission for Africa in response to section II.A, paragraph 21, of its resolution 57/283 B, and requests the Secretary-General to continue to explore all possible options to increase further the utilization of the conference centre;

2. *Reiterates its request* to the Committee on Conferences to consult with those bodies that have consistently utilized less than the applicable benchmark figure of their allocated resources for the past three sessions with a view to making appropriate recommendations in order to achieve the optimum utilization of conference-servicing resources;

3. *Requests* the Secretariat to continue to consult actively with the bureaux and secretariats of the bodies that consistently underutilize their conference-servicing resources with a view to making improvements in their utilization factors, bearing in mind that meetings are not to be held during off-hours and without interpretation;

4. *Reaffirms* that the provision of conference services for consultations of regional and other major groupings of Member States, to the maximum extent possible, facilitates the work of the Main Committees of the General Assembly and other United Nations bodies;

5. *Reaffirms* its decision in section II.A, paragraph 14, of its resolution 57/283 B to include all necessary resources in the budget for the biennium 2004-2005 to provide interpretation services for meetings of regional and other major groupings of Member States upon request by those groups, on an ad hoc basis, in accordance with established practice, and requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session, through the Committee on Conferences, a report on the implementation of that decision;

[3] To be issued in *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 32* (A/58/32).

B. Reform of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management

1. *Welcomes* the initial steps taken by the Secretary-General in the implementation of the reform measures put forward in his report[4] in accordance with section II.B of its resolution 57/283 B, and encourages the continued implementation of the measures described in paragraph 52 of his report on the reform of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management,[5] subject to the provisions of the present resolution;

2. *Stresses* that the reform of the Department should be aimed at improving the timely delivery of documentation and the quality of conference services provided to Member States with a view to meeting the needs of Member States as efficiently and effectively as possible and in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly;

3. *Notes* that these measures will include a comprehensive study of the integrated global management of conference-related resources, in consultation with the Office of Internal Oversight Services and with the full participation of all duty stations in a collaborative and consultative process with a view to reaching conclusions that are both practical and comprehensive, and requests the Secretary-General to keep the Committee on Conferences informed on the matter;

4. *Welcomes* the efforts of the Secretary-General to improve the quality of reporting by consolidating reports on related subjects, writing more focused reports with clearly defined recommendations for action and observing stipulated page limits, and requests the Secretary-General to intensify his efforts in this regard in accordance with relevant mandates and in consultation with relevant intergovernmental bodies as appropriate, while ensuring that all mandated reports are issued for consideration, as requested, in a timely fashion and contain all the information requested;

5. *Notes* that reports not originating in the Secretariat comprise the bulk of the documents issued[6] and requests the Secretary-General to examine ways and means to achieve compliance with the relevant guideline on page limits and to report to the Committee on Conferences on the matter;

6. *Also notes* the intention of the Secretary-General to conduct a comprehensive study of workload standards and performance measurement and to establish a Secretariat task force with broad participation;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to conduct a thorough cost-benefit analysis of the current approach to summary records and to review the list of bodies entitled to them, in consultation with the relevant intergovernmental bodies, with a view to assessing the relevance of such records and providing viable, efficient, effective and financially sound alternatives;

8. *Recognizes* that user satisfaction is a key performance indicator in conference management and services, and requests the Secretary-General to continue to take a user-oriented approach towards performance management on a wider scope and to incorporate the results of such an approach, as well as the results of its own internal evaluation of the Department, in the operation of the Department;

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[4] A/57/289.

[5] A/58/213.

[6] A/57/228, paras. 79-86.

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to provide assistance to Member States, as required, in the transition to electronic submission and retrieval of documents, in accordance with relevant resolutions of the General Assembly;

10. *Notes* the pilot project on ways and means of completing the concordance of draft resolutions prior to their adoption by the General Assembly, and reiterates the need to maintain the concordance principle for all resolutions;

III
Documentation- and publication-related matters

1. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that the rules concerning simultaneous distribution of documents in all official languages are followed with respect to the posting of parliamentary documentation on the Official Document System (ODS) and on the United Nations web site, in keeping with section III, paragraph 5, of General Assembly resolution 55/222, and to ensure that no document is posted on the web site in one language only;

2. *Reiterates its request* to the Secretary-General to ensure that documentation is available in accordance with the six-week rule for the distribution of documents simultaneously in the six official languages of the General Assembly;

IV
Information technology

1. *Emphasizes* that the primary goal of the introduction of new technology should be to enhance the quality of conference services and to ensure their timely provision in the most cost-effective manner, and requests the Secretary-General to report on the use of the new technology;

2. *Welcomes* the progress achieved thus far across duty stations in integrating information technology into management and documentation-processing systems;

3. *Notes with concern* the particular situation of the United Nations Office at Nairobi, and urges the Secretary-General to take steps to ensure that modern conference management and documentation practices, systems and technology are shared across all duty stations in an institutionalized manner;

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Requests the Secretary-General to submit a consolidated report on all actions mandated in the present resolution to the Committee on Conferences at its next session.